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Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to receive prestigious community service award

WINDOW ROCK – The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission was recently notified that the commission will receive the Edward M. Kennedy Community Service Award from the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity and its board of directors, in recognition of the commission's demonstrated outstanding community service.

"The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission staff are elated and appreciate the recognition bestowed by the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity," said NNHRC executive director Leonard Gorman. "Our enthusiasm is renewed by the news of this award."

Founded in 1974 as the American Association for Affirmative Action, AAAED is a national nonprofit association of professionals working in the areas of affirmative action, equal opportunity and diversity. AAAED includes individuals and organizations from the public and private sectors, business, social services, law, government and academic institutions.

Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) commended the NNHRC for achieving the award and thanked the commission for their continued efforts to help Navajo citizens.

"Since its establishment, the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission has played an important role in protecting and defending the rights of Navajo people of all ages and backgrounds," said Speaker Bates. "On behalf of the Navajo Nation Council, I congratulate the commission, the staff, and everyone who supports their efforts."

The Navajo Nation Council established the commission under the Legislative Branch in 2006, for the purpose of collecting data regarding discriminatory acts against citizens of the Navajo Nation by private citizens, businesses, organizations and foreign governments within and outside the Navajo Nation.

Previous award recipients include Wright State University (2016); Georgia State University (2015); Honorable Kathleen Martinez (2014); Honorable Julian Castro (2013); Washington Area Women's Foundation (2012); Nadine Vogel (2011); JAN (Job Accommodation Network) (2010); Military Missions in Action (2010); Tannette Johnson-Elie, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel (2009); Honorable Stuart J. Ishimaru (2008); Lilly Ledbetter (2008); Theodore "Ted" Shaw (2008); and PeopleClick, Metairie, La. Office (2007).

AAAED president Myron R. Anderson, Ph.D., sent Gorman a letter on April 14, 2017 to notify the commission of the award.

“You are indeed a role model for all of us as we seek to promote access, equity and diversity in the equal opportunity and diversity professions and in civil rights in general,” stated Anderson. “It is a high honor to acknowledge your extraordinary contributions to civil rights and to the principles of access, equity and diversity.”

The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission will receive the award during the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity’s 43rd National Conference and Annual Meeting on June 8 in Scottsdale, Ariz.

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